

August 30, 2019

HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS TIPS FOR PEOPLE WITH DIABETES



Contact:

Kevin Watler

kevin.watler@flhealth.gov

o: (813) 559-4065

Hillsborough County, Fla. – People with diabetes face particular challenges to their health care during hurricanes. It is important to prevent dehydration by drinking enough fluids, which can be difficult when drinking water is in short supply. It's also a good idea to wear a diabetes identification bracelet or card.

In addition, it is helpful to keep something that contains sugar nearby at all times, in case the individual develops hypoglycemia (low blood glucose). To prevent infections, which people with diabetes are more vulnerable to, pay careful attention to foot health, and get medical treatment for any wounds.

Emergency Supply Kit

Have enough supplies for 2 weeks and safely store the following medical supplies in an emergency supply kit:

- Copy of your emergency information, health insurance cards, a list of medications, and names and phone numbers for doctor and pharmacy
- Extra copies of prescriptions for medications that you are already taking
- Glucagon Emergency Kit (if on insulin)
- Insulin or pills (include all medications that you take daily including over-the-counter medications).
- Include an ice pack, if possible, to keep insulin cool
- Insulin syringes
- Insulin pump supplies (if on insulin pump)
- Alcohol swabs
- Cotton balls & tissues
- A meter to measure blood sugar
- Blood sugar diary
- Strips for your meter
- Urine ketone testing strips
- Lancing device and lancets
- Quick acting carbohydrate (for example, glucose tablets, orange juice, half a banana etc.)

- Longer lasting carbohydrate sources (for example, cheese and crackers)
- Empty hard plastic bottle with cap to dispose used lancets and syringes (for example, detergent bottle)
- Hand sanitizer

Helpful Hints about Insulin, Pens, Syringes:

- Never skip taking your insulin unless your doctor tells you to.
- All insulin that comes in a bottle, except glargine, can stay at room temperature (59° - 86°F) for 28 days.
- Once an insulin bottle is opened, it is only good for 28 days even if it is refrigerated. At the end of 28 days, an open bottle of insulin must be thrown away, even if some insulin is left in the bottle.
- Insulin pens in use can be stored at room temperature according to manufacturer's directions.
- Insulin pens that are not in use and are refrigerated are good until they have reached their expiration date.
- Insulin should not be exposed to excessive light, heat or cold.
- Regular and Lantus insulin should be clear.
- NPH, Lente, Ultralente, 75/25, 50/50, and 70/30 insulin should be uniformly cloudy before rotating.
- Insulin that clumps or sticks to the sides of the bottle should not be used.
- Although reuse of your insulin syringes is not generally recommended, in life and death situations, you may have to alter this policy. Do not share your insulin syringes with other people.

Things to Remember:

- Stress can cause a rise in your blood sugar.
- Erratic mealtimes can cause changes in your blood sugar.
- Excessive work to repair damage caused by the disaster (without stopping for snacks) can lower your blood sugar.
- Excessive exercise when your blood sugar is over 250mg can cause your blood sugar to go higher.
- Wear protective clothing and sturdy shoes to protect your feet if you must go outside after a disaster/event.
- Check your feet daily for an irritation, infection, open sores or blisters.
- Disaster debris can increase your risk for injury.
- Heat, cold, excessive dampness and inability to change footwear can lead to infection, especially if your blood sugar is high.
- Never go without shoes.

Food Considerations During a Disaster:

- Food and water supply may be limited and/or contaminated. Do not eat or drink food or water you think may be contaminated. It may be necessary to boil water for 10 minutes before use.

- Drink plenty of water.
- Maintain your meal plan to the best of your ability. Your meals should include a variety of healthy meat/meat substitutes (i.e., peanut butter, dried beans, eggs), milk/milk products, fruits, vegetables, cereal, grains.
- Limit sugar/sugar-containing foods including:
 - Jellies, jams, molasses
 - Honey
 - Syrups (fruits canned in sugar syrup, pancake syrup)
 - Frosted cake
 - Presweetened or sugar-coated cereals
 - Pie, pastry, Danish pastry, doughnuts
 - Chocolate
 - Custards, pudding, sherbet, ice cream
 - Gelatin
 - Soda
 - Cookies, brownies
- Monitor your blood sugars frequently and record in diary.
- When reading labels, limit products with these sugar-containing ingredients:
 - Sugar
 - Corn syrup
 - Dextrose
 - Sucrose
 - Corn sweeteners
 - Honey
 - Molasses
 - Brown sugar
 - Fruit syrup

Avoid greasy, fried foods.

- Try to eat healthy meals and snacks at the same time every day. **Avoid** periods of hunger and overindulgence. The quantity and frequency of your food intake should remain similar day-to-day depending upon your activity level.
- **Increase** food and water intake during periods of increased exertion or physical activity by either eating between-meal snacks before activity or by eating additional food with meals.
- **Carry** a fast source of sugar with you at all times:
 - 3 glucose tablets
 - 1 small box of raisins

6-7 small hard sugar candies

###